

JOSEPH A. CUMMINGS HOUSE
Water Street, approx. 850 feet west
of Route 18011
Lockport Vicinity
Clinton County
Pennsylvania

HABS NO. PA-5541

HABS
PA
18-LOKPTV,
11-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Mid-Atlantic Region
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19108

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOSEPH A. CUMMINGS HOUSE

HABS No. PA-5541

Location: Water Street, approximately 850 feet west of Legislative Route 18011, ~~Upper~~
Lockport, ~~Lock Haven~~ vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania

USGS Lock Haven Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
18.294510.4557260

Significance: The Joseph A. Cummings House is included in the locally significant historic neighborhood of Upper Lockport. The development of Upper Lockport follows a local pattern of agricultural land use yielding to residential subdivision in the wake of the development of the West Branch of the Pennsylvania Canal, dating from 1834 to 1889 (see HAER No. PA-188). Upper Lockport was subdivided circa 1860 by William White and termed "William White's Western Addition." Surviving housing dating from the late nineteenth century shares a similar vernacular character, and many feature Folk Victorian stylistic elements. The Upper Lockport area provided housing for laborers who worked at the Widmann Brewery and the Queen's Run Brickworks, especially after the demise of the canal in 1889.

The Joseph A. Cummings House is one of the oldest remaining dwellings in Upper Lockport (prior to additions). It appears to have been constructed in the 1860s soon after the development of White's Western Addition. The Joseph A. Cummings House is similar to the other dwellings in the area with its vernacular character and Folk Victorian stylistic influences.

Description: The original house appears to have been a two-bay, two-story, single pile house with a winder stair on the western interior wall. The house now contains three bays with the original building extant as the dining room and a second-story bedroom and bathroom. A two-story shed addition was made on the east facade of the original building. A late-nineteenth-century or early-twentieth-century addition appears to have been made to the south or front facade of the house, and a kitchen addition was made to the north or rear facade of the original house in the 1940s. The building contains four distinct roof lines and sections. The original section contains a front-gabled roof and a two-story shed roof addition. The south or front addition exhibits a front-gabled roof which spans the entire width of the original section and its addition. The north or rear one-story addition contains a shed roof. The addition extends across the entire width of the original section and its two-story addition. Roofing material is composition shingle throughout.

A single-leaf panelled front door, located in the eastern bay, contains a transom above. The house contains two-over-two double-hung sash windows with storm window additions. A wrap-around porch extends across the south (front) and east facades of the first story, exhibiting chamfered posts with a squared post balustrade. The porch contains a brick pier foundation with lattice infill while the rest of the house exhibits a stone pier with stone infill foundation, including the kitchen addition. The stone color is lighter on the older section than on the front addition. Concrete block piers support a rear frame shed addition. A bathroom was added on the east

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facade of the second story. Exterior inspection indicates that the bathroom may have been constructed in the 1920s.

Interior features include an original thumb-latch on the door to the second-story back stair and rimlatches on the other interior doors. Historic wainscoting is located in the present dining room. The porch floor was replaced and the porch was screened after a flood which struck Lock Haven and Lockport in 1972. The front staircase exhibits a decorative beaded newel post and turned balustrade with late-nineteenth-century stylistic elements. Door and window surrounds and baseboards are simple in design throughout. No access was available to the second story of the building.

A non-historic concrete block shed is located to the rear of the building.

History:

In 1860, James McGill, later a supervisor at the river boom, bought lot 10 in White's Western Addition from William White for \$175. The parcel is depicted as the "Jas. McGill" property on an 1862 atlas.

In 1868, the parcel was sold for \$230 at a sheriff's sale to William White, who in turn sold the property to Joseph A. Cummings a few months later. An 1869 historic atlas indicates that a building, owned by "C.," was located on the property while land records indicate that the building was a two-story frame house with "other improvements" on the lot. Cummings was the first owner/resident of the property associated with the house according to historic documentation. In 1877, Cummings conveyed property to Mary Seybold, a 45-year-old widow, for \$275.

In 1907, Seybold's heirs sold the property to Harry J. Bressler for \$600, and in 1910, Bressler conveyed the property to Florence West for \$800. The somewhat large difference in the selling price of the property between 1877 and 1907 may indicate that it was during this period that the building was extensively altered. The house was apparently moved to the rear of the lot and a two-story frame addition was built onto the front of the house. The date of this late-nineteenth or early-twentieth-century addition is supported by visual evidence, such as the turned spindles on the stair, reeded and chamfered newel post, casework, and the larger scale of the addition's rooms as compared to those of the original building.

In 1914, Florence West conveyed lot 10 to her brother Delbert West. According to city directories, West was a miner at the Queen's Run fire clay mines. He also owned the present Neff House from 1937-1955. It appears that he rented the Neff house to tenants and lived in the Joseph A. Cummings House. In the early 1940s, John Hoy constructed the rear kitchen addition onto the Cummings House. West died in 1960, and in 1962, West's heirs conveyed the property to Leslie and Marjorie Williams, the present owners.

Documentation of the Joseph A. Cummings House was undertaken during October and November of 1991. This documentation serves as a mitigative measure for the treatment of this historic property, as it would be affected by a

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proposed Lock Haven flood protection project under the direction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District. The Joseph A. Cummings House is slated for removal to accommodate an induced flooding zone. The house will be marketed for sale in an attempt to have it moved. If the house cannot be sold, it will be marketed for architectural salvage. The last recourse for the house is demolition.

Sources:

Clinton County Legal Records. Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

Dashiell, David A. *Williams House*. Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form 035-WW-041. Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Historic Preservation, 1/1985.

Hannegan, Susan. *General History and Description of Clinton County, Preliminary Research Report, Clinton County Historic Sites Survey, 1985-86*. Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Historic Preservation, 1986.

Richie and Stranahan. *Map of Lock Haven, Flemington, and Lockport*. Philadelphia: Richie and Stranahan, 1869. Located at the Clinton County Historical Society.

Vento, Frank J., Philip T. Fitzgibbons, Scott D. Heberling, and James Herbstritt. *Phase I Inventory Investigations of Potentially Significant Prehistoric and Historic Period Cultural Resources for the Lock Haven Flood Protection Project, Clinton County, Pennsylvania*. Prepared for the Baltimore District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by Vendel Enviro-Industrial Consultants, 1989.

Walling. *Map of Clinton County, PA*. New York: Way, Palmer & Co., 1862. Located at the Ross Library, Lock Haven.

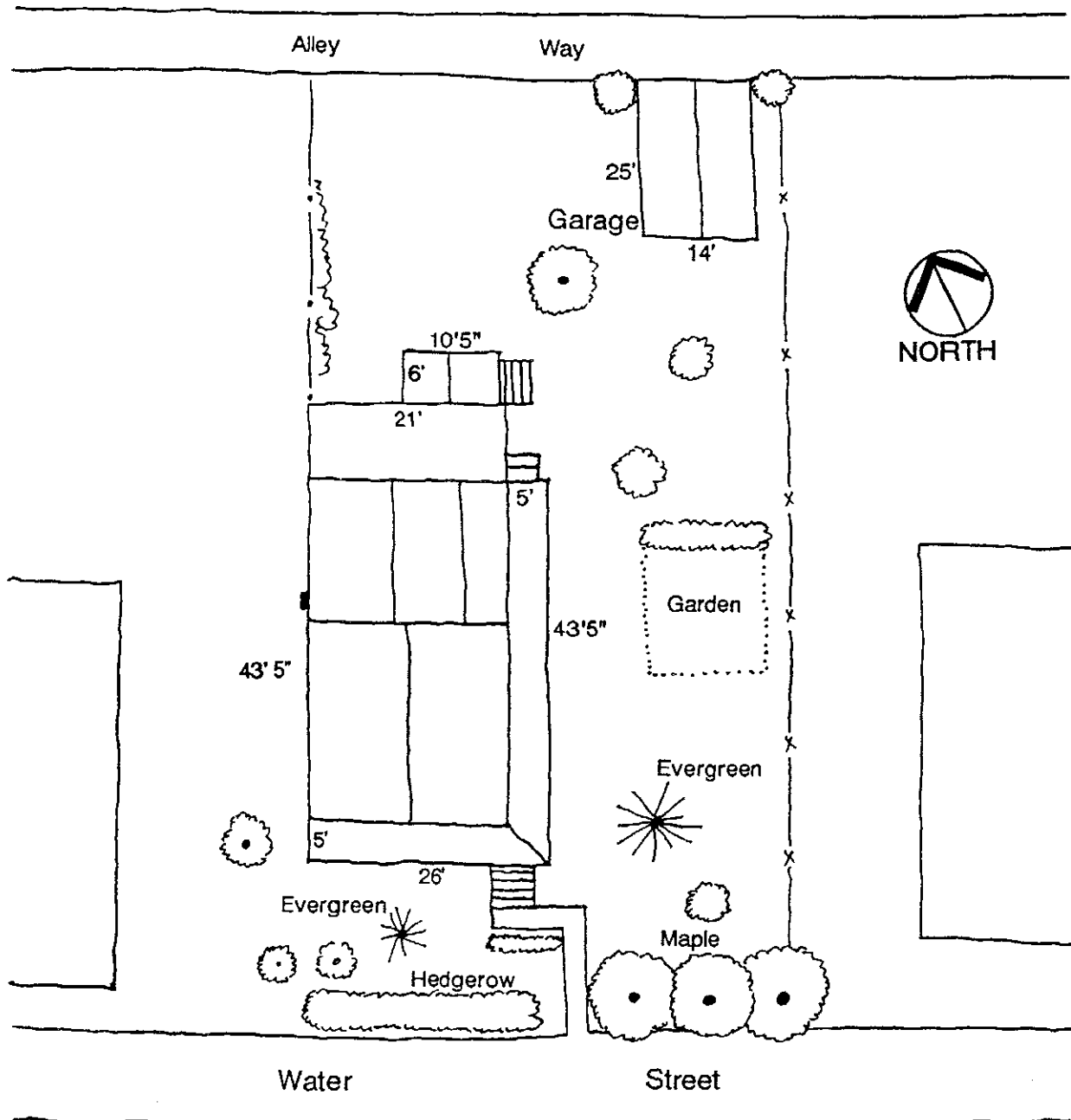
Williams, Dean. 1991. Susan C. Nabors, October, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

Williams, Leslie. 1991. Susan C. Nabors, October, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

Historians:

Martin B. Abbot and Susan C. Nabors
Kise Franks & Straw
Fall 1991

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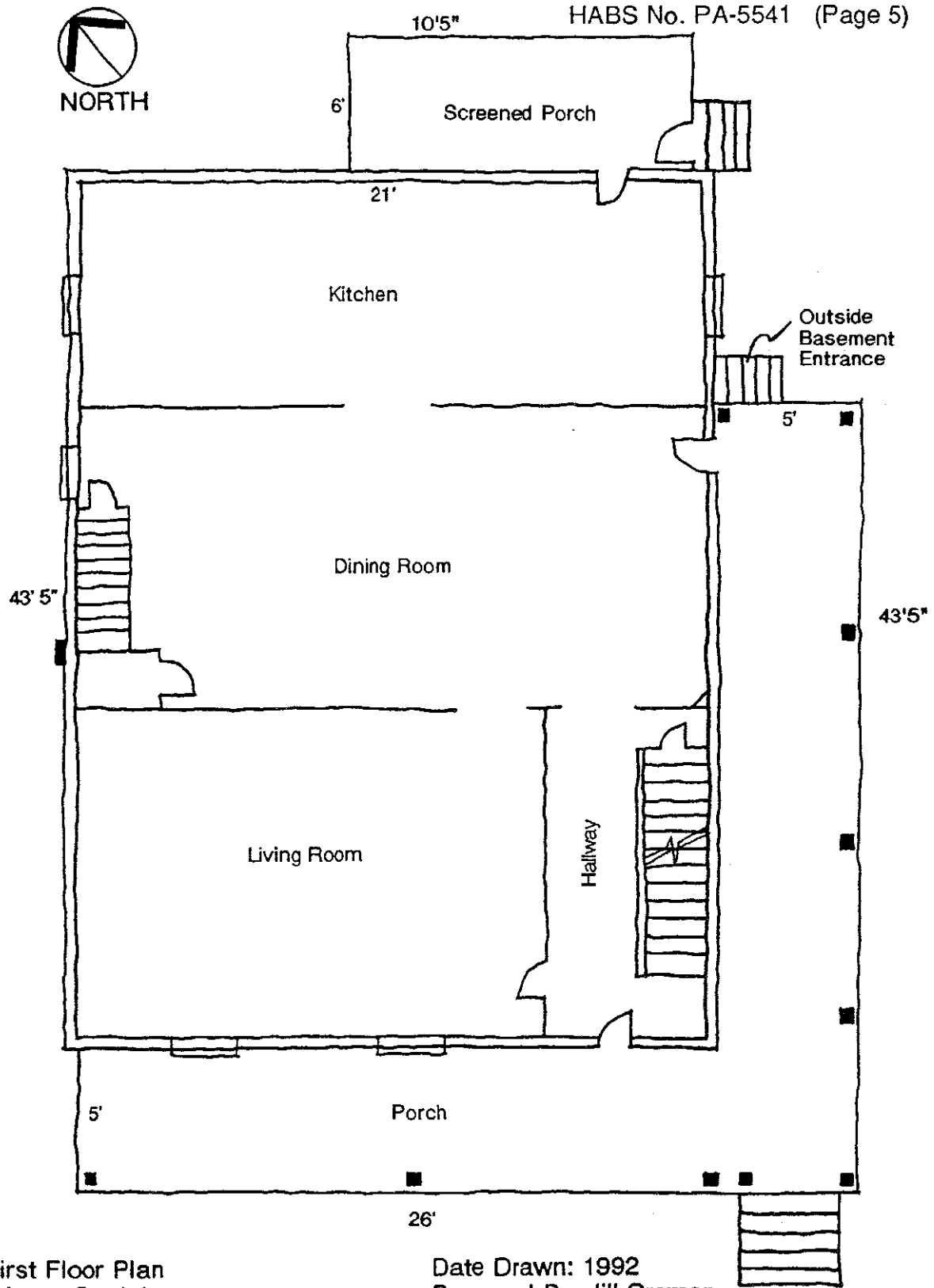


West Branch Susquehanna River

Site Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

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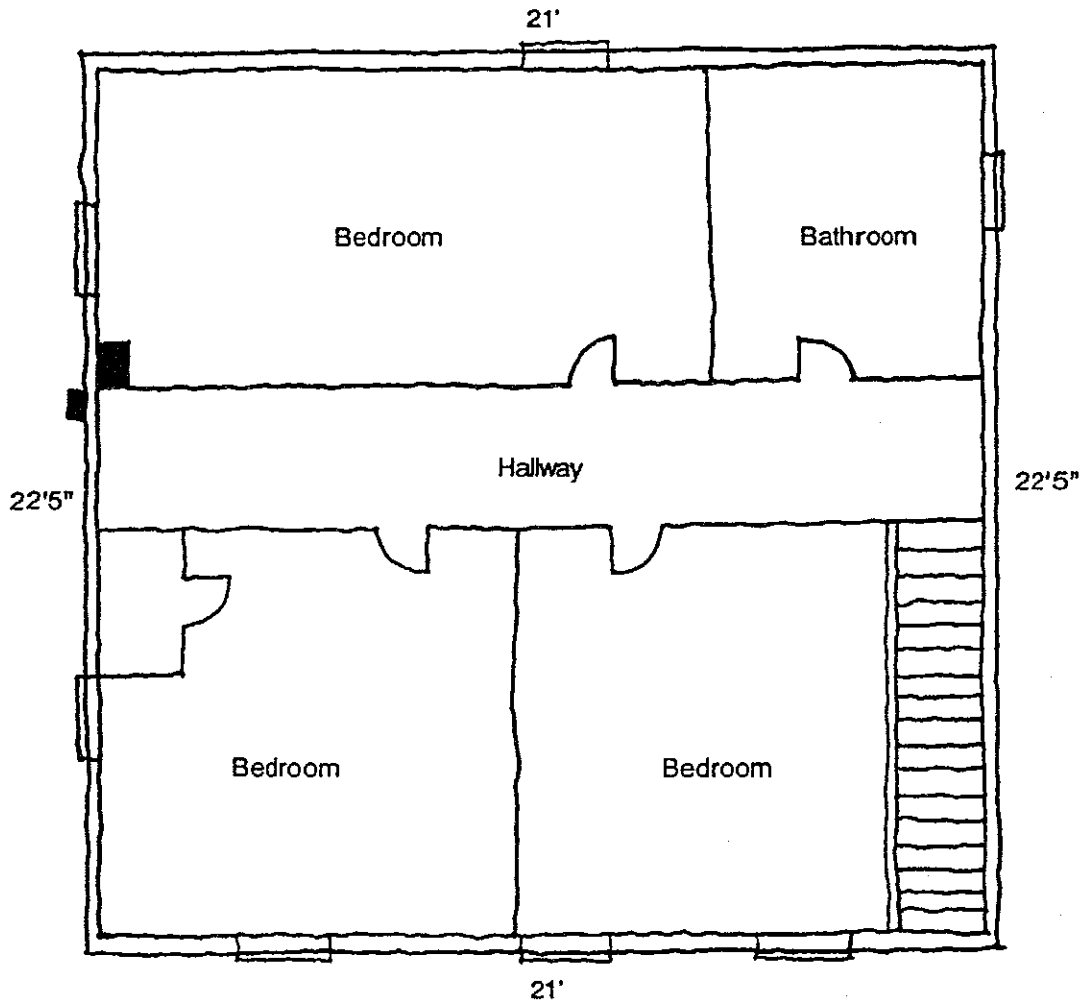
First Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer

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NORTH



Second Floor Plan
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992
Prepared By: Jill Cremer